

# **New Hampshire Special Education On-site Evaluation Report**

**Pine Haven Boys Center  
Father John Vitali, Executive Director  
Michael Maroni, Principal**

## **Final Report**

**Evaluation Conducted on October 14, 1997**

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# **New Hampshire Special Education On-site Evaluation Report**

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*Note: It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The private facility is not mandated to implement them.*

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Summary Evaluation Report Pine Have Boys Center**

## **I. INTRODUCTION:**

A New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval visit was conducted at Pine Haven Boys Center. The on-site team met on October 14, 1997, in order to review the status of Special Education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the application materials which were submitted by the school and a check of teaching certifications of special education personnel. In addition, interviews were held with the principal, special education teachers, parents and related service personnel as availability permitted. The team also randomly inspected and reviewed student files from the school, including the file of a student who falls under the James O' Consent Decree. Throughout the visit the team had full cooperation from the school personnel, which was greatly appreciated.

The report which you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of the visiting team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the NH State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no exceptions to the Standards found in that particular area.

## **II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE: *Conducted in January 1992***

Based on review of the previous program approval report, and the findings of the team that visited Pine Haven in October 1997, it was the consensus that staff at Pine Haven Boys Center have made a genuine attempt to rectify the citations from the previous program approval visit. In a variety of ways the facility offers a comprehensive program to a wide range of elementary age boys with intensive needs. The Pine Haven Boys Center prides itself in offering individualized programming for a challenging population of students and the visiting team was favorably impressed with instructional supplies and materials that are available within classrooms and therapy programs for implementation of individualized programs. Based on interviews with staff and students, it was evident that there is a clear, consistent behavior management system being implemented by all adults working with the children, and that there is ample training made available to staff in this area. It appears that all of the educational staff at the Pine Haven Boys Center have appropriate credentials for the positions they hold, with the exception of the music teacher who does not have a teaching certificate from the NHDOE. Upon review of student records, the visiting team found that files, for the most part, contained required paperwork, including IEP's, current evaluation information and other pertinent information as required by the New Hampshire Standards for Students with Disabilities. Exceptions to this are noted in the report that follows and once again the team recommends that there be improved documentation of efforts made to obtain necessary paperwork. The team was pleased to note that progress reporting on IEP goals and objectives is consistent, on-going and well documented, although there was not always evidence that this information had been forwarded to school districts.

Upon review of transition planning for students the visiting team agreed that there needs to be continued attention in this area. The team recognized that Pine Haven deals with many different school districts and

## **II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE, (Con't.)**

agencies, and that there are situations when little notice is provided regarding transition to another setting, yet there is still a need to refine procedures in this area, including procedure, follow-up services, written documentation of efforts and preparation for the student to the next learning environment. Another area that continues to warrant attention is the need to upgrade technology within the school and that there be provisions made to train staff on the use of technology to enhance classroom instruction and to implement IEP's.

In summary, it was the consensus of the team that Pine Haven Boys Center has made significant progress in addressing the citations noted in the January 1992 report. The visiting team would like to commend the staff for effort put forth to rectify areas of noncompliance and for their willingness to follow through on suggestions for program improvement.

## **III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The visiting team was favorably impressed with the staff at Pine Haven Boy's Center; they were repeatedly described as individuals who are committed, caring, well intentioned, of high caliber and implementing good programs. In each of the classrooms there is a supportive, enthusiastic atmosphere and the provision of individualized instruction for all students. This enthusiasm is fostered throughout the facility by support staff, the administration, and residential staff. Professional development training is on going through several different initiatives, and all staff are committed to providing quality services to all students.

Although there are many praiseworthy things happening at Pine Haven Boys Center, there were, however, a few areas of concern raised by the team. The first concern noted was in the area of provision of access to equal educational opportunities within all programs, including full access to NH curriculum as outlined in the NH Minimum State Standards, (Ed. #306). Currently, Pine Haven's programs do not include a broad and well balanced curriculum in the area of computer education, and it was also noted that library media services need to be improved to include ready access to instructional resources, including those available on-line or through interlibrary loan. In addition, Pine Haven needs to ensure that there is a written plan for the development and updating of the collection in the library based on an analysis of the needs of the student population and the curriculum. The second concern raised by the team was the need to develop a more systematic manner in dealing with LEA's and ensuring their involvement in the admissions process, and the development of IEP's for students enrolled at Pine Haven. Files of students reviewed during the program approval visit sometimes lacked documentation of essential paperwork as outlined in the NH Standards for Students with Disabilities. Sending school districts and other agencies involved with the children are not always submitting required paperwork, they were not always in attendance at meetings and there was not consistent documentation of internal efforts to obtain this necessary information and/or involvement. The Pine Haven Boys Center would benefit significantly from a comprehensive review of admission policies to ensure that procedures clearly reflect the required documents that must be provided by LEA's, as well as the mandatory participation in the planning and writing of IEP's and other important program decisions.

### **III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE: (Con't.)**

In summary, the visiting team would like to recognize the Pine Haven Boys Center for the quality of programming made available to all students. The citations that appear in the report that follows are due mainly to oversights in paperwork documentation, and continued effort needs to be put forth to ensure

that all student records are current and have documentation of LEA involvement in educational planning and decision making.

### **COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: All Programs**

#### **COMENDATIONS:**

- Staff were consistently described as caring, skilled, dedicated and child centered.
- Throughout the facility there is an atmosphere that encourages teamwork and cooperation.
- Pine Haven is commended for the provision of necessary supplies and instructional materials and facilities to meet the needs of the students in each program.
- The facility is clean, well maintained and offers a variety of motivating learning environments for children.
- Professional growth opportunities for instructional staff are encouraged by the administration.
- There is a good working relationship between teachers, administrators, related service personnel, and the residential program.
- Parents interviewed via phone were supportive and pleased with programming offered to the children at Pine Haven.

#### **CITATIONS: (in numerical order)**

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <u>Ed # 1133.05(h)</u> | Pine Haven must provide documentation that students enrolled at the facility have access to equal education opportunities as outlined in the NH Minimum State Standards. Library Media Services do not meet requirements, and computer education as outlined in Minimum State Standards needs to be enhanced.   |
| <br>Ed# 1133.08 (a)    | <br>Pine Haven needs to ensure that there is a certified music educator on staff or that consultation be provided to the facility by an individual certified in music education. In addition, the facility needs to ensure that there are certified individuals on staff in the areas of Library /Media and computer education , or that there are certified individuals in these areas providing contracted services and consultation to the faculty on a regular basis. |

#### **IV. COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:    All Programs, Continued)**

##### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- As Pine Haven admits new students, staff need to initiate conversation with LEA's regarding the administering of the New Hampshire Assessments for students in grades 3 and 6. It is strongly suggested that documentation of any decisions regarding participation in NHIAP testing be documented in student IEP's.
- As Pine Haven continues with their curriculum revision cycle, the team recommends that that staff utilize the NH Curriculum Frameworks as a basis for planning and writing of curriculum for each grade level. Copies of the New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks are enclosed.
- The staff at Pine Haven need to improve documentation of all efforts made to obtain required paperwork from LEA's, as well as ensure that LEA's are at all meetings such as IEP and placement meetings.
- Transition planning for students needs to be strengthened and outlined as a component in IEP's.
- It might be beneficial to develop a paperwork compliance checklist to ensure that all necessary documentation is up to date, on file, and obtained for the LEA prior to admission of any student.
- Student IEP's need to reflect that students are being provided instruction in art, music, PE, health and any other subjects in which they are enrolled.

## **Pine Haven Boys Center**

**PROGRAM:** Classroom for 8 – 9 year olds.

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- Teacher has strong commitment to children.
- The environment in the class is warm and cheerful with age appropriate learning activities and materials.

### **CITATIONS:**

No citations were noted.

## **Pine Haven Boys Center**

**PROGRAM:** Classroom for 9 – 11 year olds.

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- Colorful classrooms.
- Committed and enthusiastic staff.
- Good opportunities for in-service and other trainings.
- Strong and supportive leadership by the principal.

### **CITATIONS:**

ED# 1107.06 1 file: The file did not have SEE/PT evaluation written summary.



## **Pine Haven Boys Center**

**PROGRAM:** Classroom for 11 – 12 year olds.

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- Great student/teacher ratio.
- Staff members interviewed seemed highly motivated and committed to students and program.
- Very structured, safe and supportive environment.
- Play therapy was well supported with space and staff and supplies/materials.

### **CITATIONS:**

**ED# 1107.08** 1 file: LD observation and LD summary report not found in file.

## **Pine Haven Boys Center**

**PROGRAM:** Classroom for 12 – 14 year olds.

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- It was noted during classroom observation that the students worked with their own individual schedules; very impressive classroom structure.
- The students and teacher seem to have a wonderful rapport.
- All learning and instruction is highly individualized based on student needs.

### **CITATIONS:**

ED# 1107.08 1 file: No classroom observation supporting LD diagnosis found (however, was entered into SPEDISas being conducted) and there was no evidence that the private school requested it from sending school. LD summary report was also not found.

ED# 1104.01(h) 1 file: IEP did not identify length of school year or school day.

ED# 1109.03 1 file: File had no documentation that classroom teacher was present at IEP meeting and no representation from the LEA.

# **ADDENDUM**

## **JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM**

**Pine Haven Boys Center**

**Student File Review**

**Case Study Document**

**Reimbursement Claim Form**

**Case Study Addendum Form**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ADDENDUM</b> <b>JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</b></p>
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**Pine Haven Boys Center**

**CITATIONS:**

Ed #1109.01(h)      1 file: The IEP did not have the length of school year or day.